



# CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY NEWS RELEASE

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## Department of Toxic Substances Control

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**T - 32 - 04**

For Immediate Release

June 24, 2004

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### **DTSC Certifies Tourtelot Project Site in Benicia**

Berkeley --- The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) announced this week that it considers all environmental cleanup and remediation activities completed at the 220-acre Tourtelot site in Benicia. This is the first time in California that a formerly used defense site known for the presence of ordnance and explosives (OE) has been completely approved for residential development.

The cleanup of the Tourtelot site, conducted by Pacific Bay Homes, under the oversight of DTSC, was officially "certified" as complete by DTSC on June 23, 2004.

"We are using the Tourtelot site as a model for ordnance cleanup projects in California," said DTSC Director Ed Lowry. "With all cleanup work complete, this property can fully be put back into productive use."

During the Tourtelot cleanup project, which began in 2002, more than 4,530 ordnance items containing explosive materials were safely recovered from the property, and 193,840 pounds of OE scrap and approximately 46,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil were hauled off site and disposed of at a permitted facility. In September 2003, DTSC certified that a portion of the Tourtelot site slated for the construction of 81 homes, required no further OE removal or cleanup work. Centex Homes and Shea Homes are expected to build a total of 417 homes on the Tourtelot site.

The cleanup project used established OE clearance protocols and new techniques by adopting a multidisciplinary approach that included subsurface clearance to depth, multiple geophysical scans, and extensive quality control and quality assurance program, and a no-exposure solution called remedial grading. The goal of the project was to locate, identify, and remove OE items left behind by the U.S. Army, and make the property safe for residential development.

From 1944 to 1960 the Tourtelot site was leased by the U.S. Army as part of the Benicia Arsenal (Arsenal). The Arsenal was used as a principal depot for ordnance storage, issuance and shipment. After the Arsenal was closed in 1964, the property changed hands, and plans for residential development were initiated but were delayed because of environmental concerns.

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This is first site in California history where a Community Advisory Group (CAG) was formed with the assistance of DTSC and the City of Benicia to further involve the community in the progress of the cleanup work.

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***The Department of Toxic Substances Control's mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment and ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.***